WORKERS TRIBUNE '24

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CUPW Pull the Plug on this Government!

55,000 CUPW members are now in the fourth week of an all-out strike. Negotiations are deadlocked and Canada Post is hell-bent on breaking the back of the union. In a blatant attempt at intimidation, they are laying off striking workers. This strike represents a crucial juncture for CUPW to fight back against the drive to turn the postal service into another part of the "gig" economy, like Amazon with its business model of sweatshop labour with no rights. But this fight is not merely against the money-losing postal Corporation, it is against the anti-worker Trudeau government!

The Liberals are weak and know that they are barely hanging on to power. This is the only reason that Trudeau has not yet given the order to break the strike, like he did with rail and at the ports only months ago. With elections around the corner, he does not want to further alienate workers. At the same time, CUPW is facing a determined enemy as Canada Post wages a relentless assault on jobs and working conditions in its drive to become a competitive player in the delivery business. It is by seizing on the weakness of the Trudeau government and escalating the strike that CUPW can strengthen its position at the bargaining table.

This will only happen if CUPW breaks out of its isolation. This means setting up solid pickets that no one dares to cross, to end the rotten scabbing agreement that allows PSAC technicians and office staff to continue working. It means mobilizing to extend the strike to other parts of the public sector and to other delivery companies. How about starting with Canada Post owned Purolator? The union leadership is not waging the struggle on this basis in order to avoid making trouble for the Liberals. So instead, they restrain the struggle and pretend that the government and its agencies (mediators, CIRB) can be neutral arbiters. The result is that CUPW is left standing alone in a war of attrition that favours the company, as seen with the layoffs. ***To break the deadlock and win the strike, CUPW must aim for the jugular—pull the plug on the Liberal government!***

And the best weapon at the disposal of CUPW workers is the broad hatred for the Trudeau government. It has overseen a decade of plummeting living standards, housing crises, and declining public services (served with many liberal tears from the PM). Screw that! CUPW's fight to defend jobs, benefits, working conditions and public services is in the direct interest of all workers who face similar attacks.

A common objection to this is that if Trudeau falls, the right-wing Poilievre will take over and things will be worse. But the question is not ***if*** Trudeau will fall, but ***when*** and ***how***. Everyone knows that Trudeau is toast, only surviving thanks to support from the NDP under sellout Singh. The union bureaucrats have betrayed the workers by supporting the Liberal-NDP alliance. It is precisely the bankruptcy of Trudeauite liberalism that has fueled the rise of reaction and Poilievre's Tories. It is far better if Trudeau falls due to a labour upsurge. This is what will determine where the labour movement stands when Poilievre takes over: in a position of strength or on its knees.

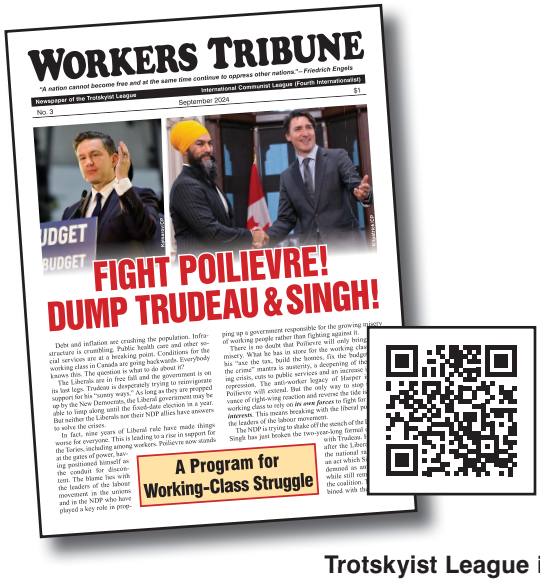
For decades, under Liberal and Tory governments alike, Canada Post has been trying to compete with the rise of private, largely non-union delivery

companies by dividing the workforce into tiers with different wages, benefits and conditions. While CUPW has been at the forefront of defending pensions, a good retirement is out of reach for workers who can't get enough hours to qualify for full-time positions and are forced to work multiple jobs to make ends meet. The key to winning CUPW's demands on wages, benefits, pensions and work conditions is to fight to end the tiers. This must be carried out as part of a fight to re-establish the state monopoly over the entire postal and package-delivery system. Contrary to the bosses who want divided "gig" companies, this is what would be most rational and efficient.

But in order to win this battle, the labour movement must become a force to be reckoned with. And right now, there is only one way to make this real—give the government the boot they deserve! This is how CUPW will rally broader forces to their side, not just in words of solidarity but in actions. This is also the only road to a serious fight to organize non-union delivery workers, leading to a united union of all delivery workers with wages, benefits and working conditions at the highest level.

To win the strike:

- **No reliance on government mediation, the CIRB and labour code!**
- **End the tiers! No settlement without reinstating all workers laid off during the strike!**
- **Fight for a state monopoly of the postal and package-delivery system!**
- **Make this strike an all-out battle to bring down the Liberals! Send delegations to other unions, starting in the other delivery companies and the broader public sector, calling on them to strike alongside CUPW.**



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